

# Exhibit B

three years after his death,  
his message of love and peace...

When John died, I thought it was the worst thing that could ever happen. But that was only the beginning.

—YOKO ONO, summer 1983

NOVEMBER 1980

THE MORNING winter light is streaming into the kitchen window of the Lennons' huge apartment, one of six they own in the Dakota, Manhattan's West Side landmark building. John Lennon is sitting at the breakfast table, sleepily reading the morning paper, steam rising from his coffee cup. Fred Seaman, a sandy-haired assistant in his late 20s, wearing an IMAGINE T-shirt, enters the room from the inner-courtyard stair well, piles of mail and magazines stacked in his arms. Without looking up from his paper, Lennon holds out his hand and asks for the latest music papers.

The Lennons' album *Double Fantasy* has just been released. Seaman hands Lennon copies of *Billboard* and *Cashbox* and Yoko Ono rushes into the kitchen to watch over John's shoulder as he flips to the Top 100 charts. David Geffen, whose record company Ono chose to distribute *Double Fantasy*, called earlier to tell them the album entered the charts at number 25, but Lennon wants to see it with his own eyes. He breaks into a big grin and glances up at Yoko. "Not bad, eh, Mother?" He grabs a red pen and circles the entry: Number 25 with a bullet. With the marker's bold line, he draws an arrow from the number-25 slot to number one, putting a line through Barbra Streisand's album *Guilty*. "We're on our way," he laughs, putting the *Billboard* into a drawer in the wooden kitchen table.

The buzzer on the phone is heard and Mioko Onoda, a Japanese maid, rushes to answer it. She turns to Ono, announces that Rich De Palma wants to speak with her. De Palma is office manager of Lenono, John and Yoko's business, which takes up the entire first-floor apartment known as Studio One. Ono answers De Palma's barrage of questions about interview requests (from Barbara Walters, among others) and tells him she will be down to sign the pile of checks he says are waiting. Before hanging up, she

asks him to order a limousine for two P.M., the time they plan to go to the recording studio. They are working on the songs for *Milk and Honey*, the intended sequel to *Double Fantasy*, Lennon's first album in five years. Ono then leans over to kiss Lennon, telling him she is headed down to Studio One. Lennon nods. She handles the family business.

Downstairs, surrounded by huge filing cabinets labeled APPLE and HOLSTEIN cows, Ono signs checks, makes some calls and an hour later, buzzes Lennon, who is still lounging upstairs. Lennon, revitalized by *Double Fantasy*, is listening to the song they had recorded the night before. Ono asks him if he wants to go out and get a cup of coffee before they head off for the studio. Minutes later, he is downstairs, wearing a black-canvas shirt and black-cord pants, fingering a pair of tortoise-shell glasses that have replaced his familiar round workmen's specs.

Arm in arm, Ono and Lennon walk out through the archway of the Dakota. Ono's thick black hair is tied tightly back, her wrap-around sunglasses shielding her eyes. Although it is a clear day, the wind is biting, and Lennon complains that he did not wear a coat. Ono has only a light sweater on and feels the cold, too, so they clasp each other more closely. As always, there are a few fans outside, including Jeri Moll and Jude Stein, two women in their late 20s, who have waited outside the Dakota seemingly every night for the past five years. They are old-timers and murmur familiar greetings to the couple as the Lennons say hello.

Lennon and Ono wander down the block toward Columbus Avenue, then over to 71st Street, where they stop at Café La Fortuna, a coffeehouse, for espresso and pastries. They're trying to stay on a macrobiotic diet but fall off the wagon a lot. Conversation is light: They banter about their son Sean's latest antics, as reported by his nanny, Helen Seaman, a large woman who looks after Sean when John is busy. Helen is Fred Seaman's aunt; today, she is out at the Lennons' Long Island estate in Cold Spring Harbor. John says he regrets that work on the album has kept him from the boy so much lately.

"Let's bring him in for the weekend, even if we're working," he

article By DAVID and VICTORIA SHEFF

# THE BETRAYAL OF JOHN LENNON

...seems lost in the lying, thieving, backbiting  
shuffle to destroy his widow and make a buck off his name

says. Ono nods. John makes the domestic decisions.

They return to the Dakota for messages and stop at their offices. Rich and Greg Martello are there now, doing some routine filing. They are two young brothers who broke into the apartment building of their hero, John Lennon, some months ago as a prank and, since they seemed harmless enough, were put to work. It is that kind of place—a bit zany, what with business decisions sometimes affected by Ono's reading of the tarot cards or the numbers—but by rock-'n'-roll-millionaire standards, a friendly and down-to-earth sort of place.

Outside, the limo has been waiting, so they slip out the archway again, pile into the car's back seat and head off to the recording studio. There, inside a glass booth with a color photo of Sean tacked above it, they sing cuts for the album, then work on mixing them into the other tracks as the evening wears on. They won't get out until late that night, but that's not unusual.

In fact, nothing that has happened today is remarkable for the colorful couple who, after years of upheaval, followed by years of reclusiveness, now seem to be finding contentment along with a fresh burst of creativity. As to the contentment, it's about time: John just turned 40. "Life begins at 40," he told an interviewer. "It's like, Wow, what's going to happen next?"

DECEMBER 9, 1980

It is minutes after midnight, and the horror will not sink in. John Lennon was murdered just over an hour ago, but those who have been part of his everyday life cannot comprehend it, cannot do anything but try to find a way into the first-floor apartment at the Dakota. A few of them have managed to fight their way through the growing crowd of men, women and children who are shivering at the corner of Central Park West and 72nd Street, candles lit, holding hands, many with tears streaming down their faces. The police, on horseback, help clear a way for Lenono staffers, as the horses snort steam into the freezing air.

Yoko Ono, accompanied by Geffen, has been sneaked into the building through the rear entrance and is in the kitchen of her apartment. Speaking numbly, she asks De Palma to make only three calls: to Julian Lennon, John's 17-year-old son from his first marriage; to John's aunt, Mimi Smith, who raised him; and to Paul McCartney. De Palma is unable to contact any of them directly

but does manage to reach Mrs. Lee Eastman, McCartney's mother-in-law, who responds, "You expect me to wake Lee over this?" and hangs up. The second time De Palma calls, she is more adamant: "Don't ever call at this time of night again!"

De Palma reports to Ono, who winces and tells him to keep trying to reach the three; because all the lines are jammed, it proves almost impossible. As soon as one light on the telephone console winks out, another lights up. Ono stands up shakily. She wants to be alone in her bedroom.

From upstairs, the voices in the street can be heard echoing through the old apartment's corridors and booming up the canyonlike inner court. The crowd has grown to 5000, bringing traffic to a standstill on Manhattan's West Side, and people are singing *Imagine* and *Give Peace a Chance* in slow, echoing cadences. There is even a chorus of *Dear Yoko*.

De Palma stays downstairs in a Lenono office, fielding calls, trying to give each person a few words in reply before pushing another button on the console. There is one call he is especially glad to get: Elliot Mintz, one of the Lennons' closest friends, is flying in from Los Angeles.

A couple of hours later, Mintz arrives, is rushed through the crowd, past the outer offices rapidly filling with wreaths and flowers and packages, and into the elevator to the living quarters above. Pausing outside the huge mahogany door to the Lennons' apartment, he draws a breath and knocks. Mioko, puffy-eyed but silent, lets him in. "Yoko-san in her bedroom," she says. Mintz walks toward the bedroom but cannot bring himself to go in. Instead, he goes back downstairs to Studio One to pitch in with the others.

In Studio One, the Lenono group has swelled to a small group of assistants, attorneys and businessmen, including David Warmflash, a lawyer who worked for the Lennons for some time, and Geffen. It was Geffen who got to the hospital after the shooting and then emerged supporting Ono as they faced a horde of reporters and photographers. Mintz assists in organizing the group to screen calls for the remainder of the night with De Palma, ferrying up the most important questions for Ono to answer in her apartment above.

Ono makes one decision immediately: Lennon's body is to be cremated at a mortuary

*"Now the fringe is being heard from. One man claims to have just arrived from a distant planet. . . ."*

in suburban Hartsdale. She gives the instructions quietly, asking that Warmflash see to it. Although Ono seems to be holding together, someone in the group says that the two of them were so close, and she is so grief-stricken, might she try to harm herself? De Palma is dispatched to see that she does nothing rash.

De Palma nervously walks into her bedroom, says nothing to Ono, who is still on the bed, and walks into her bathroom. He checks for razors and any sharp objects, and Ono pads over to the entrance to the bathroom. She asks what he is doing and he tells her, somewhat sheepishly. Although she is startled, she says, "I understand—but don't worry." In fact, she continues, she wants De Palma not to go easy on her; she wants to know and hear everything that happens. They are not to keep anything from her—not a newspaper headline, not a rumor. As if to convince De Palma that she is serious, she has him switch on the television set in her bedroom and turn up the volume. She sits and begins to watch TV coverage of the murder. It seems surreal, unconnected to the events of the past few hours: There are clips of the Beatles and film of her and Lennon marrying in Gibraltar, romping at the bed-ins in Amsterdam, walking together in Central Park just a month ago.

By the early-morning hours, Mintz and De Palma are exhausted, still manning the phones in the dimly lit offices, which are now filled with hundreds of floral arrangements. There is a call from the receptionist at the Dakota's front desk: Someone has called from Los Angeles to swear that he is leaving for New York to "finish the job Chapman started." After a little detective work of his own to make sure it isn't another crank call, Mintz phones the Los Angeles police. A short while later comes word that he was right to take the threat seriously: A man is arrested at the Los Angeles airport when he punches out a police officer and vows to "get" Yoko Ono. He has a history of psychiatric disorders. The problem is disposed of quickly, but it is the first indication that there may be worse to come.

DECEMBER 10, 1980

Early this morning, Ono is told that Sean is awake. They have not been close in the way that the boy and his father were, but now she shakily goes in to see him. She takes the five-year-old's hand, leads him downstairs in the service elevator, through the labyrinth of passageways in the basement and up the steps to the building's entryway. There are morning

people ten yards away, beyond the iron gates. Ono points to a spot by the doorway and tells Sean that that was where his father was shot. Sean wants to know why someone shot his father. There is little she can say.

They return upstairs and Ono sits at a typewriter to compose a message calling for a silent vigil in Central Park and elsewhere. She then goes to comfort Sean, who is nearby, with his nanny, crying hysterically and calling out for his father.

There is another disturbing call received downstairs: A man claims he placed a bomb in a package delivered to the Dakota. By now, the Lenono offices are cluttered from wall to wall with flowers, gifts, cards, letters and boxes. A bomb squad in body armor is sneaked into the building, where they find the package identified by the caller, cut through it and find nothing. The caller was a crank. But the two threats and the half dozen other ugly telephone calls result in another decision: Ono announces that if Lennon's fans wish to remember him, they should refrain from sending flowers (which were stacking up to the ceiling) or gifts and should, instead, send donations to the Spirit Foundation, the organization the Lennons founded in 1978 to distribute funds to various charities.

This is the day a bulletin brings news of the suicide of a distraught fan—the first of three—and Ono can no longer hold on. She breaks down uncontrollably before finally placing a call to a New York newspaper asking that the suicides cease.

On the first floor, the phone calls continue, and now the outer fringe is being heard from. One man claims to have just arrived from a distant planet with a message from John to Yoko. Mediums call with messages from John they claim are matters of life and death. A boy calls to say that John's spirit has taken over his body. A man calls from England to say, with a trembling voice, that he has absolute proof that Lennon's murder was a conspiracy. All the callers urgently demand to talk with Ono.

Early in the afternoon, Ono's returning calm is shattered when Mintz and Warmflash turn over to her a small carton containing John's ashes. She manages to ask Warmflash what John looked like before the cremation. "He looked like he was sleeping," he says. Ono, who is on her bed, clasps her arms around her knees and stares straight ahead for several hours.

Downstairs in Studio One, the group continues to screen the incoming mail and calls. Besides De Palma and Mintz, other

assistants have come to help—and to talk. The radio speakers blare with songs by Lennon, interrupted by news reports about further developments in the case. Geffen, whose photograph with Ono is on the front page of most newspapers today, is on the telephone repeatedly to his second in command at Geffen Records, talking about the sales of the *Double Fantasy* album. He talks almost exclusively about the effect of the shooting on his business and is heard to say that he hopes war in Poland can be averted, for a war would knock the Lennon tragedy off the news-weekly covers.

De Palma is opening telegrams, most of them messages of condolence, and he stops after reading one. He walks over to Mintz and hands him the telegram. Mintz reads it and says, "I just can't tell her about this one now." The sender is a woman who claims to "know" someone who was present at Lennon's cremation—and that the cremation was both filmed and photographed. "You may want to contact me for more information," the message concludes. Mintz turns the telegram over to a security man. Although no further public evidence that these films exist has surfaced, the case is considered open.

Another macabre call is directed to Doug MacDougall, at the time the Lennons' only full-time security guard, who informs Mintz that an attendant at the morgue has sold a photo syndicate some shots of Lennon's body "with the sheet off." That sets off a frantic flurry of phone calls to head off the sale, but it is too late. One of the morgue photographs will shortly appear on the front page of the *New York Post* and later, in color, of *The National Enquirer*. A Dakota investigation later discloses that the attendant was paid \$10,000 for the photographs. He becomes, Mintz observes, "the first one to make a buck off John's death."

MID-DECEMBER 1980

The first to think somewhat more ambitiously about capitalizing on Lennon's death is a member of the inner group, Fred Seaman. The slim, German-born assistant, a journalism graduate of City College of New York, obtained his position through his uncle and aunt. Norman Seaman was a longtime friend of the Lennons; his wife, Helen, became Sean's nanny, and so it was natural that Fred should come to work in the family business—running errands for Lennon, serving as gofer during the recording sessions of *Double Fantasy*, taking John and Yoko trays of sushi for dinner.

One of Seaman's assignments was to accompany Lennon to Bermuda earlier in the year, working as his boy Friday. It was there that Lennon wrote and made a rough cassette of the flood of new songs that would become his half of *Double Fantasy* and *Milk and Honey*. Because he

came to feel that he was the closest person in Lennon's life by the time he was killed—closer than friends such as Mintz, closer even than Yoko and Sean.

Two days after the murder, Seaman, who claimed to have been devastated by Lennon's murder, showed up at the door of an old college friend to say, excitedly, "I'm set for life." In the days that follow, however, he repeatedly tells the people at the Dakota that he cannot function, that Lennon's death is too much for him to cope with. Ono hears about it and agrees that he should take some time off from his \$36,000-a-year job.

He uses the time well. Within a couple of weeks, he has drawn up and notarized a contract with his college friend, an aspiring writer named Bob Rosen. The contract specifies that they will become equal partners on a book about Lennon, and on all "projects relating to this book," including merchandising rights and "John and Yoko dolls."

Rosen, a slight, short man with a receding hairline and a stutter, lives in a tiny apartment in a tenement on 169th Street. That becomes headquarters for "Project Walrus," as they call their scheme. As soon as Seaman returns to work full time at the Dakota, he says he will report daily to Rosen about goings on there, and Rosen will keep notes. (They will also both keep daily diaries of their own.) Seaman hints that there may be some primary source material available. To pay Rosen's salary, Seaman will take money out of the Lennon petty-cash fund.

Seaman returns to work at the Dakota as a Lennon assistant. Within a week, he has begun a routine that will hardly vary over the next 12 months: On Friday afternoons, Seaman walks out of the Dakota with a shopping bag full of documents taken from the office files and from the Lennons' apartments. He passes beneath the archway, walks a couple of blocks west, then rides up to Rosen's apartment. There, on a nearly full-time basis, Rosen reads, digests, copies and distills the personal papers Seaman has stolen.

For Ono, the weeks after the murder pass either in isolation, hardly leaving her bedroom, or in taking care of business—all the memorials for John, the letters that need answering. She insists, despite the mood in the apartment, that Sean celebrate Christmas. A tree is put up, lights are hung,insel is placed on the branches. A female Akita puppy that Lennon bought for his son's Christmas present nearly starved in the days after Lennon's death—nobody knew who was supposed to feed it. Now Ono puts the puppy under the tree for Sean with a ribbon saying, FROM DADDY. Sean names the dog Merry.

JANUARY 1981

After New Year's, Ono allows Sean and the puppy to go down to the Lennons' estate in Palm Beach, Florida, where the

they can escape New York's winter and the funeral mood around the Dakota. She does that partly because, as she is frank enough to admit later, she finds it painful to be around Sean. Although still in shock, she can find solace in work and returns to the recording studio to complete a song she and Lennon were working on, *Walking on Thin Ice*, which Geffen will release a month later. Although work on the record proceeds well, she spends the vast majority of her time in bed at home, eating chocolate cake delivered by a local gourmet shop and sipping tea in the dimly lit room.

From time to time, she emerges from the bedroom and makes brief forays downstairs. Sean returns from Florida and she almost cannot bring herself to see him: The memories are too disturbing. But she knows she must and begins to spend more time with him, begins to get to know him as she did not before Lennon's death.

APRIL 1981

There have been no more death threats, the crowds around the Dakota have thinned and for Ono, there is the possibility that, as gloomy as things are around the apartment, at least the worst of it may be behind them. She feels strong enough to tackle a large project: a solo album in which she will work through some of her feelings. It will be called *Season of Glass* and one cut will contain gunshots. For the cover photo, Ono chooses a window in the Dakota that Lennon used to sit at and stare out of, daydreaming, and places his bloodstained glasses on a table in front of it. She knows it will be controversial, but this is how she feels she must express her grief. She insists on clicking the camera's shutter herself.

Uptown, Project Walrus is proceeding on schedule. Rosen is sifting through the bags full of papers Seaman has brought him. It is a treasure-trove and Rosen records his reactions to the material in his journals, which will surface later. He is beginning to feel like Lennon's alter ego, the only one who really knows him—and that includes Yoko, who is brooding in the Dakota, and even his partner, Seaman, who is so busy plotting and sneaking things out. . . . Only he, Rosen, alone in his apartment with John Lennon's paper legacy, knows what he was like.

One afternoon, in a shopping bag that Seaman brings in, Rosen discovers the mother lode: In hardbound *New Yorker* diaries dating from 1975 to 1980, John kept his own private journals. In them, Rosen and Seaman have possession of his most personal thoughts and admissions during the period he was least in public view. This is history! More, this is big bucks. As Rosen puts it in his own journal, "Dead Lennons = BIG \$\$\$\$\$\$."

MAY 1981

Seaman, still a trusted aide at the Dakota, is sent by Ono to Wales to visit

John. She wants Julian, Lennon's son by his marriage to Cynthia Powell, to have some gifts from his father.

Arriving in Wales, Seaman begins courting Julian. He drops hints of his growing feelings of disillusionment with Yoko. He gives him the gifts—and, as a personal token, a copy of the cassette of John's final songs recorded in Bermuda. Seaman's journals suggest that his aim is to draw Julian into the plan, to persuade him to claim he knew of his father's diaries and that Lennon intended his eldest son, not Ono, to be the guardian of the diaries. Julian knows nothing of this but is thrilled at the "gifts."

In New York, an assistant relays a message from the New York coroner's office informing Ono that she should claim her husband's clothes—the ones he was wearing when he was shot. Chapman has changed his plea to guilty, so the clothes will not be needed as evidence. She takes a car to the coroner's and comes back with a shopping bag labeled PATIENTS BELONGING. Inside, folded neatly, are Lennon's bloodstained clothes. She returns to the Dakota and to the refuge of her bedroom.

JULY 1981

By midsummer, Ono is making definite attempts to reclaim a normal life. Although she and Sean are constantly attended by several guards, and although by most standards the life of a woman managing an estimated \$150,000,000 fortune can hardly be called normal, there is at least a renewed interest in the mundane. Take the redecorating of the apartments, a project begun before Lennon's death: It's time to get on with it, she decrees.

So Samuel Havadtoy, a Hungarian immigrant with a successful career in interior decorating, returns to work he began in the summer of 1980. He soon gains Ono's trust with an easy, bantering manner. Havadtoy enjoys playing with Sean, tumbling with him on the grass out at the Cold Spring Harbor estate, getting beat at video games. Ono realizes she enjoys Havadtoy's company and agrees to accompany him on her first visits to restaurants and occasional social gatherings since Lennon's death. They are becoming close. Life begins to look hopeful. Not good, not happy, just hopeful.

AUGUST 1981

Project Walrus proceeds apace. There is a new member of the team, Rick Dufay, a guitarist with the band Aerosmith, who is as excited as Seaman and Rosen about helping to shape the true picture of John's legacy for the world. They spend many evenings, plotting and fantasizing about what their work will mean to the world.

Rosen's diary entry for August 14, writing of himself in the second person:

You say you're going to incite a cultural revolution and by the time Brother Walrus returns from his

mission of great social and political importance, people will be rioting in the streets 'cause of what you've done. You say you're going to pull something off. In short, you're going to be in the vanguard of a massive cultural breakthrough, the biggest one since Beatlemania, but you can't go around saying stuff like that publicly; you barely dare say it privately, 'cause when people hear weird shit like that, fuck it, they'll think you're crazy. So we won't say it, we'll just do it.

SEPTEMBER 1981

Lennon was in turn intrigued and skeptical about Ono's use of psychics, whom she would pay as much as she would other consultants, such as lawyers and accountants. One of them was a man of uncommon shrewdness, a tarot-card reader named John Green who seemed to know how to read the cards in a way Ono found intriguing. Green became Ono's chief card reader during the years the Lençons lived out of public view. Since Lennon's death, he has been living free of charge in a loft building Ono owns, even though she has stopped using his services. The only condition she has made is that he must not take visitors there, because the loft is used to store irreplaceable artifacts, such as original acetates of Beatles records, and pieces of Lennon's artwork.

She hears that Green has been charging admission for public events in the loft and that he has been bragging about his access to the Beatles acetates, so she has a lawyer tell Green to move out. Green is given notice to leave by a specified time. On that date, the locks are changed, but Green has not yet moved out, so he immediately sues. Rather than appear in court, and fearing for the materials in the loft, Ono settles for a payment of \$30,000 to Green. Havadroy and Warmflash go downtown to inspect the loft and realize Green has not yet moved all of his belongings out. On a desk, Havadroy sees a pile of typewritten papers: It is a chapter of a book Green is writing about the Lençons, which will be published as *Dakota Days*. Havadroy scans the manuscript and finds that, while living free of charge in Ono's apartment, Green has been writing a book that charges that she is, among other things, a neurotic, a practitioner of black arts and the destroyer of Lennon's talent.

In Central Park one afternoon, Sean is accompanied by his bodyguard, MacDougall. His responsibility is to stay close to Sean at all times. With Ono looking on, the boy wanders out of MacDougall's sight. Ono gets angry at MacDougall, who stiffens. "If you don't like the way I do my job," he states, "I quit." Sean has become used to MacDougall, but Ono feels he has become lax and is trying to bully her. She accepts his resignation. She will hire a new chief of security. New

York police detective sergeant Dan Mahoney. Things are now getting nasty and she is being tested. A couple of old friends have turned on her and new people are around. The level of tension around the Dakota rises perceptibly.

OCTOBER 1981

Rosen's journal entry for October 18:

Fred [Seaman]'s fantasy: I drop dead after writing the last word of Project Yoko. Rick [Dufay] drops dead after playing the last note of his album. . . . Yoko and Sean drop dead. Helen [Seaman] drops dead. . . . Julian, Cynthia and May Pang [Lennon's lover during his separation from Ono in the early Seventies] drop dead. Paul, George and Ringo drop dead. Everybody who was ever associated with the Beatles in any way, shape or form drops dead. Fred is the only one who remains alive. He corners the gossip market. . . .

We [Seaman, Dufay, Rosen] are all that close. We know how contemptible the other one is. Interesting contest, who is the most contemptible among us. . . . Surely, I could not win such a contest. Or could I?

Undated Rosen journal entry:

The only argument me and Dufay had was over who was going to fuck Yoko.

NOVEMBER 1981

In a London newspaper, Ono reads that Julian Lennon has entered a recording studio intending to record some of his father's last unreleased songs—the ones intended for the *Double Fantasy* sequel. Ono is dumfounded. "How could he have gotten John's songs?" she asks aloud.

Seaman is sitting nearby in the Lennon offices. He shakes his head sympathetically. "Didn't I tell you Julian was a bad seed?" he says.

Ono calls Julian in England and asks him about the songs. He explains that Seaman gave him a cassette. Ono is confused but tells him that his father intended the songs for his own album. Julian apologizes.

There is a call a day or two later from MacDougall. Mintz takes the call.

"I'm owed back pay," he tells Mintz.

"Yoko will take care of it," Mintz replies.

"Well, I'm holding some stuff until I get my money."

MacDougall says that when he quit, he took with him for safekeeping some expensive electronic equipment, a dozen cassette tapes, two Swiss army knives, a pair of Lennon's glasses and a love letter from Lennon to Ono including the original version of his song *Dear Yoko*. He'll be glad to return the items when he gets the pay he feels he is owed. Mintz takes MacDougall a check and retrieves the items.

Ono grows more puzzled by Seaman's behavior. Like MacDougall, Seaman is showing signs of arrogance, of sloppiness in his work, almost as if he is tempting someone to reprimand him or even fire him. Ono wants to leave well enough alone; she is too close to Seaman's aunt Helen and uncle Norman to make trouble for Fred.

In truth, Seaman has become more and more engrossed in Project Walrus and is beginning to see the end of his double-agent role at the Dakota. He decides, in fact, it is time to act more boldly, and so, according to his diaries, he and Dufay sneak into Ono's apartment while she is out and steal a large haul of audio equipment, including a costly amplifier Lennon used to keep by his bed. Seaman has previously taken rehearsal tapes of Lennon songs to Rosen's apartment, and Dufay is a professional musician, so there is plenty of use for the equipment.

The next day, someone notices that a couple of stereo components are gone. Seaman says it was probably the air-conditioning repairmen, who were here. Ono nods. She mentions it to Mintz, who is coincidentally taking an inventory. Mintz, who is now on Ono's staff, discovers that, in fact, much more than the stereo amplifiers has been taken, and informs the new security team. Methodically, the guards interrogate people and report to Ono that it can only be an inside job.

She begins to agonize. It is not the money but the growing feeling that the tide is beginning to turn against her, that people in her employ and in her trust are betraying her. There are roughly a dozen people on the staff and another half dozen who come and go in the offices on a daily basis. Mahoney wants Ono to order lie-detector tests for everyone. She refuses, reasoning that it would crush morale. Mahoney suggests calling in the police, but Ono refuses that, too, for the same reason. No suspicion whatever is cast on Seaman, who writes in his diary: "Yesterday's theft doesn't seem to have any consequences, thank God."

It is now nearly a year since Lennon's death. There have been the confrontations with employees, the burglary, and now there are stories that books are being planned by people other than Green. It is rumored that Lennon's ex-lover, May Pang, is writing her memoirs. And there is also word that Albert Goldman, biographer of Elvis Presley and exposé of drug orgies and panty fetishes, is negotiating for a seven-figure advance toward a book on Lennon. Even Rosen is moved to write in his journal, after hearing the news about Goldman, "God help John Lennon."

Ono blocks much of it out and determines to push on. But then a letter arrives that even De Palma is loath to show her. The orders still stand: She wants to know

ure letter, glancing at the envelope, which bears a return address of Attica state prison; a portion follows:

Dear Yoko:

My new attorney, Marshall Beil, may have contacted you concerning a possible agreement that would consist of seeking to use any funds—earned by the release of certain materials—toward charitable (child relief organizations) purposes. . . .

Yoko, if you feel that what I might enter into (even though all funds would be given to charity) is against your wishes, I would honor this completely. . . .

Sincerely,  
Mark David Chapman

Chapman, who began his letter reminding Ono that he had earlier written to her to "apologize" for murdering her husband, ends the letter by saying that if she does not want him to proceed with the release of his story, she can be assured of his "cooperation in this delicate matter."

The implication is immediately clear to Ono: Her husband's assassin is proposing that she assent to his participation in a book. He assures her that all funds would go to charity (a meaningless gesture, she knows, since the well-publicized Son of Sam law, named after the mass murderer who inhabited the same institution as Chapman, makes it virtually impossible for a criminal to profit from his crime).

Sick, Ono heads for her bedroom.

It is several days later that two men are stopped inside the Dakota. They say they have business with Yoko. Pressed, they begin to run. One gets away, but the other is tackled by a bodyguard. Before he is taken away by police, the obviously deranged man shouts that he has come to "get" Yoko and Sean.

Security is further tightened. Ono has spent more than \$1,000,000 on personal protection in the year since Lennon's death.

DECEMBER 1981

As the New York weather turns colder, Seaman throws caution to the winds. Although his use of the Lenono petty-cash fund to pay off Rosen has not yet been discovered, there is plenty of comment about his use of limousines to take him to restaurants and clubs—which he promptly charges to Lenono. Other expense-account discrepancies crop up. At an office Christmas party Ono throws at Windows on the World, the spectacular restaurant atop the World Trade Center, Seaman shows up wearing one of Lennon's scarves. Ono spots it and confronts him.

"Isn't that John's scarf?"

"No, Yoko," he says, "it's mine."

The lie is so brazen Ono is shaken. Later on at the party, Seaman approaches Ono and admits the scarf may be John's after all. Ono does not know what is going on

with Seaman, but it soon becomes clear: While using the Lenono Mercedes-Benz for personal business, something employees are forbidden to do, Seaman gets into an accident. The repair bill is \$12,000. Finally, some time later, Ono goes into her private bathroom and finds Seaman taking a bath during working hours. He will be fired and given \$10,000 severance. Seaman writes defiantly in his diary, "My immediate regret is that I won't have any opportunity to go through the files and avail myself of 'research' material." The thefts—entire file folders, manuscripts, journals, even a novella by Lennon titled *Skywriting by Word of Mouth*, which Rosen in his journal pronounces worthy of James Joyce—have not been discovered. In the six apartments owned by the Lenons, no one is quite sure where things are kept.

JANUARY 1982

Living with Lennon's diaries, typing all day and night, deciphering Lennon's abbreviations and codes, is beginning to get to Rosen. It is claustrophobic working in his tiny apartment and, he writes, "I'm worried about Seaman. It is imperative I have leverage to force him to give me credit and pay me my full share. Possession of the journals are (sic) my best leverage."

But he does not want to keep the original journals indefinitely. "It's going to be like having the Lost Ark. Don't want my apartment raided by Indiana Jones."

Rosen's worries about Seaman are well founded. Seaman has been under the care of Dr. Francis DeBilio, a psychotherapist whose practice is in Brooklyn and who apparently has not had the sort of contact with glamor and fame and intrigue that Seaman talks about. The doctor introduces Seaman to another patient, Norman Schonfeld. A retired diamond merchant, Schonfeld becomes as excited as DeBilio about the potential in Project Walrus and agrees to finance the enterprise. It is just what Seaman needs, since now his salary and perks are gone.

Seaman tells Rosen they have an angel and the three of them get together over drinks to discuss terms. For half an interest, Schonfeld will pay salaries and all expenses. The plan devised by "NG," as Seaman refers to Schonfeld in his journal, is to set Seaman up as the real inheritor of Lennon's artistic and social legacy and to spread as much misinformation about Ono as possible. The "black widow" is to be discredited by whatever means possible, so the world can receive what John Lennon left behind through his anointed messenger, Fred Seaman. And, incidentally, the world will make the messenger and his helpers rich.

The only problem is, there are too many helpers. Dufay is not an active participant, but DeBilio and Schonfeld per-

se Seaman that Rosen should be cut out. It doesn't take much persuading Rosen, who shows signs of being worn out, is sent on a "vacation" paid for out of the project's funds. With Rosen safely in the Caribbean, Seaman records in his diary what happens next:

Norman (Schonfeld) and I decided to take all the stuff out. Hung out in Bob (Rosen)'s apartment, smoked a joint and then absconded with his copy of the journals, the Bermuda tape (of Lennon singing) and anything else we could carry out. A few days later we returned with a rental car and proceeded systematically to remove everything that I had given him.

Upon his return, Rosen finds his apartment emptied, reports it as a burglary to the New York Police Department but then gets a call from Seaman admitting that it was he who had done it. What is Rosen going to do about it? What *can* Rosen do about it?

DeBilio continues to counsel Seaman on their grand strategy. Seaman writes:

The more I tell [DeBilio] about Julian, the more convinced he grows that we can't rely on him. . . . He explains Julian might consider himself the protector of his father's reputation (on which he's riding) and he doesn't want to explode the myth. So now we have to think about a way we can legitimize my "ownership" of the diaries so we have a fighting chance in court, or, alternatively find some way to prevent y.o. from making a stink.

Oblivious, Ono makes plans to record a new album. Proposed title: *It's Alright*.

AUGUST 1982

Rosen, broke and depressed after being cut out of the scheme, tries to sell his story to publishers and magazines, including Playboy. He has salvaged his own journals and some other materials, including tapes, from Seaman's raid, and represents himself to publishers as having a photographic memory. When he discovers that no one will touch the story without documentation, he has a friend call Mintz and suggest that "certain materials" will be returned for a price. Mintz threatens to call the police, and so at last, Rosen decides to come in from the cold.

By now, Havadtoy is running interference for Ono, and it is he who negotiates with Rosen. What Rosen has said about Seaman and some missing diaries is enough to convince Havadtoy that Ono herself should meet with Rosen. A meeting is held at the Lenono offices, and there Rosen spills it all—the thefts, the conspiracy, everything.

Rosen, dubbed the John Dean of the affair by Mintz, is grilled over the next several days by Mintz, Havadtoy, lawyers



representing Ono and, in the end, the New York District Attorney's office. Since he has come forward voluntarily, Rosen is not charged with anything at this time (and maintains he was basically a dupe of Seaman's). Because Rosen claims to fear for his life and to be flat broke, Ono pays for him to stay at a hotel, at which point he hands over copies of his own diaries, which incriminate him and the others.

The extent of the plotting and the length of time it has been going on stun Ono, making her feel both foolish and hurt. The mass of material that has been stolen is staggering: entire filing cabinets full of papers, manuscripts, love letters, private photographs, Lennon's clothing and, worst of all, his diaries.

Havadtoy attempts to smoke out Seaman privately. Of paramount concern is that Seaman not destroy the materials. Calling on Seaman's uncle and aunt, Norman and Helen, Havadtoy attempts to get a message through, asking that Fred return the documents and turn himself in. Norman relays a message back from Fred: "Let Yoko sue me; it will mean a million dollars in free publicity."

The following day, Seaman himself calls Ono at the Dakota. He says it is true that he has the diaries and that he took them to make certain Julian read them first. Nervously, he says, "If you don't do anything rash, the journals might find their way back." The conversation, recorded by Mahoney, ends with a flat statement by Seaman: "I wouldn't want anything to happen to you and Sean."

Later that night, Ono sinks back into a chair and says to Havadtoy, "What did we do to him to deserve this?" She decides that this time she will not be driven back into her bedroom and determines to continue working on her album. But because of what she heard in Seaman's voice, she orders even more security for herself and Sean.

Havadtoy continues to use Norman Seaman in attempting to negotiate with Fred. Norman is one of Ono's oldest personal friends, going back to her days as a conceptual artist in Greenwich Village. Several days after the call from Fred, Havadtoy is saddened to discover that Norman is covering for him.

"Fred did do it for Julian's sake," Norman says to Havadtoy. "I saw John give Julian his diaries back in 1979. I was there when he did it."

"Norman," Havadtoy points out, "we know the diaries were kept up through 1980. How could he have given Julian the diaries in 1979?"

A call to Julian in England confirms the point. Havadtoy is in the apartment discussing Norman's lie with Ono, when there is a buzz from the receptionist downstairs: A man identifying himself as Willie Wilson has arrived at the Dakota carrying a box full of papers, talking about John Lennon and some diaries.

Havadtoy rushes downstairs to meet

Wilson, a shabbily dressed black man who promptly opens the box and allows him a peek at the contents. Immediately apparent is a photocopy of one diary in Lennon's handwriting, dated 1980, and three hardbound volumes that appear to be original diaries.

"Where did you get these?" Havadtoy asks.

"A junkie in Harlem," Wilson shrugs.

"How did you know to bring them here?"

"Didn't take too much brains to know where the stuff came from," says Wilson.

Havadtoy suspects that Wilson is fabricating the story about the junkie and threatens to call the police and charge him with extortion. Wilson quickly offers to retrieve more stolen material from the same source in Harlem if Havadtoy will keep the police out of it. Wilson says it will cost him \$5000 to get the rest of the diaries. Havadtoy naively agrees to pay Wilson. The man takes the cash, walks out of the Dakota and is never seen again. To Havadtoy's chagrin, it turns out that, aside from the 1980 photocopy of the Lennon diary, the other journals are not by Lennon but by Fred Seaman.

Once the embarrassment of having paid for the wrong journals has passed, Havadtoy realizes that having Seaman's diaries provides an unexpected bonus. Upon examination, the scope of the conspiracy becomes evident when clues from Seaman's diary are put together with references from Rosen's diary. From their reading of the diaries, they decide it is likely that Schonfeld, as the financier of the caper, has possession of the journals. He has, after all, advanced \$33,000 to Seaman, if the conspirators' diaries are to be believed. Havadtoy calls Schonfeld.

The wealthy diamond merchant agrees that he may know how to retrieve the Lennon diaries—for "compensation." Ono and Havadtoy confer and agree to pay the man off. "We had no choice," Havadtoy says later. "If we had simply called the police, the diaries would undoubtedly have been destroyed." And so, for "expenses" of \$60,000, Schonfeld agrees to procure the safe return of all of John Lennon's original diaries.

At the appointed time, Schonfeld arrives with a bag full of documents. There are file folders of material from the Lennon offices, photographs, letters, the *novella*—and four hardbound *New Yorker* diaries filled in with John Lennon's handwriting. Schonfeld smiles as he hands Havadtoy an envelope he says is a "present for Mrs. Lennon." It is a drawing by Lennon.

There is no 1980 diary, however. Since Havadtoy has seen Willie Wilson's photocopy of it, he knows it is potentially the most valuable to history; it was filled in through the day of Lennon's death.

"Where is 1980?" he asks Schonfeld

"I don't know anything about a 1980 diary," he says.

After more discussion, Schonfeld insists he has met his part of the bargain, has no knowledge of the missing diary, and departs with his check.

There the matter rests. The original 1980 diary never surfaces, and there is even evidence that the earlier diaries were tampered with. Mintz says after examining them that there appear to be entries in a different hand, and there is a chilling entry in Fred's journal that is discovered later: "We [DeBilio and Seaman] have intense talk about doctoring diary to show Lennon's setting me up to write book . . . to build up to great intimacy." Lennon's diaries were in the possession of the Project Walrus gang for more than a year.

SEPTEMBER 1982

Last spring, Sean asked to have a friend from school, seven-year-old Caitlin Hair, spend the weekend with him at Cold Spring Harbor. His nanny Helen Seaman's granddaughter, Tanya, also joined them. While they were playing, Caitlin apparently fell. Now comes the news that Caitlin's mother claims Caitlin was injured and is suing Ono for \$1,050,000.

Like the bodyguard before her, the nanny had received specific instructions from Ono on caring for Sean. Among them was the order that, on that particular weekend, no visitors be taken out to the Cold Spring Harbor estate. When Ono, upset over the lawsuit, asks Helen why her orders were rescinded, Helen explains that Caitlin and her granddaughter showed up at the Long Island estate unexpectedly. She couldn't very well turn them away, could she?

In fact, as Ono finds out later, Helen chartered a limousine for the children, billed it to Lenono and had them picked up in New York and delivered to Cold Spring Harbor. That tears it for Ono; she's had enough of the Seamans. For disobeying instructions and then lying about it, Helen is fired and given a \$10,000-a-year pension.

"It's been very difficult for Sean," Ono says tightly to a visitor. "First Sean loses his daddy. Then his bodyguard [MacDougall], whom he'd grown close to. And now Caitlin and Helen. Sean seems very well adjusted, but I'm worried that it may be difficult for him to trust people."

OCTOBER 1982

If she feels that people in her personal life are letting her down, Ono has at least one friend in the business world who has stood by her. Eddie Germano, owner of the Hit Factory studios, where she and Lennon recorded *Double Fantasy*, has given her solace and advice through the months. In fact, when she finally parts ways with Geffen, it is Germano who suggests that she talk with a close friend of his at PolyGram Records, who is extremely interested in her work. Since she cannot



recommendations will be disinterested, meets with PolyGram executives, who offer her an excellent contract.

Germano calls to tell her that the executives at PolyGram are highly enthusiastic about her proposed album *It's Alright* and that, in gratitude, they want to pay him a finder's fee of roughly \$50,000. Even though he told her he was getting no money for this, does she mind if they pay him something? Fine, she says, pleased that a friend can profit from an honest intermediary role.

DECEMBER 1982

Ono releases *It's Alright*, a solo album that gets high praise from previously skeptical reviewers. This has been an issue about which she is profoundly sensitive—the charges that she is without musical talent, carried along only on her dead husband's coattails. This is some sort of vindication, and the mood in the Dakota brightens appreciably for the first time in months.

FEBRUARY 1983

Ono is informed that her close friend Germano has received \$600,000 from PolyGram as an advance against Ono and Lennon albums, plus a royalty on every record of their music to be sold by PolyGram. Ono feels he has not only taken unconscionable advantage of her but has lied to her. It is a final betrayal for Ono. "Eddie was one of the closest people ever to me," she says. "I truly thought he was a friend."

She sits in her white "Egyptian" room (complete with a genuine sarcophagus in the corner), sipping tea and shuffling her tarot cards. "Why is this happening?" she asks a visitor. Whether it is the money or something else about her life, there does not seem to be any letup now on thrusts from the outside. The mail keeps pouring into the Dakota—in 1981, there were more than 250,000 letters—and most of it is admiring of her and Lennon. But now the psychos seem to be picking up the pace. Ono opens one letter in front of the visitor and reads it. It says, in part: "To fulfill the prophecy, I am going to kill you. You were not supposed to have survived." Cigarette shaking slightly, she dials Mahoney. Another investigation.

Just a few days later, another threatening letter arrives, and this one is not handled so routinely. For a number of months, someone in Florida has been sending letters announcing the existence of a Mark Chapman Fan Club, ending with the salutation "Death to Ono." In this letter, however, which is accompanied by a record album riddled with bullet holes, the writer announces that he has come to New York with his brother to kill her.

Mahoney, who has worked in New York's elite career criminal division, intensifies security around the apartments. He tells Ono that he cannot guarantee her

security at the Dakota and for a day she moves into a midtown hotel. She realizes she cannot do that forever and tells Mahoney she is moving back into her own home, fearful or not. Mahoney and the other guards, all of them off-duty police officers, beef up their patrols in the hallways of the Dakota.

The Mark Chapman Fan Club brothers have been spotted, tailed and lost. To anybody visiting Ono during this period, the scene is incongruous: Ono, Sean and Havadtoy nuddled in the kitchen, as their cook slices vegetables for *sukiyaki*; just beyond the kitchen, in the hallways hung with photographs of John and Yoko at peace rallies, and with the celebrated war is over poster, heavily armed guards walk warily up and down.

One afternoon, while Ono is at the recording studio, there is a call from downstairs, saying that a man fitting the description of one of the Florida brothers has been spotted lurking near the Dakota. Mintz puts on a bulletproof vest and approaches the man and asks him for the time. When the man looks at his watch, his jacket is pulled up and Mintz notices the butt of a gun sticking up from his belt. He immediately walks away, calls the police and watches as they arrive and arrest the man. Although the other brother remains at large, the man will admit they intended to "get" Ono, and he is apprehended—and later released.

MARCH 1983

There are precious few people left to trust, and Ono is depending mostly on her bodyguards for any sense of security. So when an anonymous call is received saying one of her security men is working against her, the paranoia around the Lennon offices is almost palpable. No matter that Mahoney assures her of his complete trust in his staff, the idea that someone in her own home may kill her has been planted. She begins sleeping badly again. In discussions with Havadtoy and Ono, Mintz wonders if the threats and calls can be part of a conspiracy. Not only is there Seaman, who is running around spreading poison about the "black widow," but there are all those disaffected aides and retainers. . . .

What also fuels the dread is the fact that she is involved in monumental business battles that include unresolved Apple and Beatles affairs, and there are tens of millions of dollars at stake. Could any of the parties in that war be so desperate?

The rumors and the threats continue. One night, Ono leaves her bedroom to find her gentle assistant, De Palma, sitting on a chair by the bedroom door, with a handgun tucked into his belt. Astonished, Ono asks what he is doing. De Palma tells her he is at his "post." "You don't know how big this thing is!" he cries. "The people who are doing this are too big to fight!" Some time later, De Palma will resign with Ono's gratitude for his loyalty.

Fear is running rampant in the Dakota, and the odd sequence of events in the next few days does nothing to dispel it: There are two mysterious break-ins at the apartment; a set of keys is left inside a bedroom door that was left securely locked; when the family and staff attend De Palma's farewell party, they return to find the doors locked and bolted from the inside; and Mahoney's home is burglarized—and only the files pertaining to the Florida gunmen are taken.

Even more upsetting is the discovery soon thereafter of listening devices planted in the Lennon offices and in Ono's apartment. Mahoney cannot determine the source of the bugs, but he knows how to find them and remove them. Several days later, he sweeps the offices again as a precaution—and finds that some of the bugs have been replaced. Mintz, who has been trying to pull all of this together, comes to the conclusion that the threats and break-ins and wire taps are part of a plot to discredit both Ono and Lennon's memory. He has his suspicions but will not divulge them other than to say he believes Ono's enemies to be "extremely powerful."

As for Ono, she says to the rare visitor she trusts, "I cannot comprehend the meanness of it all."

APRIL 1983

Ono hears the news that Fred Seaman has landed a book contract with Simon & Schuster, reportedly for a \$90,000 advance (with a third going to a ghostwriter). In their naïveté, Ono and Havadtoy thought that catching Seaman with all the diaries, possessing copies of his own incriminating journals, having paid more than \$65,000 to assorted partners and accomplices, having done all of this entitled them to believe that Seaman, at least, would be out of their lives. It now appears that he is going to publish a book defaming Lennon's memory and Ono's character, or so the rumors have it. There is also word that former security man MacDougall is cooperating with Seaman, and other disaffected employees may be involved, too. But the strongest rumor is that the book will be based largely on the private diaries of John Lennon.

It is time to stop the in-house detective work and call in the real thing. At Ono's request, Havadtoy calls the police and Seaman is at last arrested on charges of grand larceny. After the arrest, police search Seaman's home and a storage room he has leased and find some of the stolen electronic equipment. Seaman then turns over photocopies of the Lennon diaries, as well as tapes and slides. Although there is a photocopy of the 1980 Lennon diary identical to the one Willie Wilson delivered, there is no trace of the original.

Later, when he is released on his own recognizance, Seaman will invite a visitor to his apartment in Brooklyn Heights and provide an insight into his obsession: Th-

place is a virtual shrine to the memory of John Lennon. There are photographs and posters of Lennon hanging everywhere, gold records from *Double Fantasy*, a library of books on Lennon, huge piles of records and tapes of Lennon songs. Seaman will put a cassette on the player and show slides on a bare wall: John, Yoko, Sean, Helen and others at play in Cold Spring Harbor, in Bermuda, in Palm Beach. When the slide show is over, he sits and stares out his window, rubbing his hands, muttering, "The black widow is going to be destroyed."

Near the front door of Seaman's apartment is another memento: a piece of Yoko's artwork titled *A Box of Smile*. The visitor opens the box and finds a mirror on the inside of the lid.

MAY 1983

It looks as if it will be the summer of the trashing of John and Yoko. The first of a slew of books, long rumored, is out: *The Love You Make*, by former Apple insider Peter Brown and collaborator Steven Gaines. "Don't worry about it," Havadtoy tells Ono. "No one takes this trash seriously." But by midsummer, the book is a best seller and is being excerpted in newspapers everywhere beneath banner headlines proclaiming "HOW YOKO STOLE JOHN AWAY FROM HIS WIFE."

Ono and Havadtoy are having lunch at the Russian Tea Room the same week that Brown is publicizing the book in New York. By coincidence, Brown is there, too, and during the meal is called to the phone to hear some welcome publishing news: The paperback rights to the book have been bought for \$750,000. Ono has not read the book. As Brown leaves the restaurant, he stops by the table and greets the couple. Havadtoy glowers at him and refuses to shake hands, but Ono nods calmly at him when he says, "We should have lunch together." The next day, Brown is asked if any of the Beatles are still "speaking to him." He says he has just met Ono and "She is very happy [with the book]."

John Green's book, *Dakota Days*, follows shortly, with excerpts in *Penthouse*. Green, crediting his "fine memory," reconstructs several hundred pages of conversations between himself and John and Yoko, depicting Ono as an irrational dragon lady jealous of Lennon's talent. He represents himself as the mastermind behind Ono's business success and claims to have given Lennon the idea of using his househusband status as a cover-up for "losing his muse." He will promote the book by reading tarot cards for Penthouse Pets at a comedy club.

And on the heels of Green's book comes May Pang's book, recounting her affair with Lennon during his separation from Ono. In *Living John*, which will be used as the cover story for *Us* magazine, Pang describes Lennon as a vicious alcoholic tricked into returning to Ono by being

lured to a smoking cure, during which she hypnotized him. It, too, will receive considerable media attention.

Throughout the summer, Ono keeps her reactions to herself, but as some of the stories filter in through the press, she finally responds quietly to a visitor: "The Green book is particularly unfair to John. He hardly ever saw him."

Mintz, sitting nearby, adds, "It's filled with imaginary conversations. And as far as making up the househusband story—John was as proud of staying home with Sean as anything he ever did."

As to the Pang book, Ono concedes that Lennon could be a terrible drinker, but regarding Pang's most sensational claim—that he was hypnotized by Ono while being cured of his smoking habit—she wryly points out that Lennon could not even be hypnotized to stop smoking. He was a smoker until the day he died.

Havadtoy, who has more than once admitted that it is hard having a relationship with a woman whose idolized husband stares down from every wall, is put in the position of defending the sincerity of John and Yoko's love: "For whatever reasons, all these people are trying to prove the relationship was bad, but it just wasn't true. Their music proves it, if nothing else. Their love was the single most important thing in their lives."

Ono and Lennon were not shy about sharing that love with the public, occasionally even in photographs. But that, too, turns out to have a sordid side. One evening, the telephone rings upstairs and Havadtoy takes the call. The *New York Post* wants a comment from Ono on a report that some nude photographs of her and Lennon are the cause of a bizarre murder plot in New Orleans. It seems that a man who claimed he found a carrousel of photographs in a garbage can (they had actually been under the care of Fred Seaman when he worked at the Dakota) was angered over a girlfriend's intention to return them rather than sell them to a magazine, as he wanted to do. In a rage, he plotted to kill her and was caught by the police. The photographs, which are not explicit, will be nonetheless published by *Swank* in August.

On May 27, Seaman pleads guilty to second-degree grand larceny and is sentenced to five years' probation. His plea is contingent on his agreement not to reveal what is in the Lennon diaries. In return for not going to prison, he is reported to have agreed to cooperate in the investigation of others involved.

Contacted to tell their sides of the story, DeBilio and Dufay are not available; Schonfeld spits into the phone that he knows nothing about John Lennon, Fred Seaman or any diaries; and Rosen says, "I probably knew deep down that the journals were stolen, but I never admitted it to myself—I didn't want to know."

*People* magazine is preparing a story on the rash of kiss-and-tell books it refers to as the "SELLING (OUT) OF JOHN LENNON." Since Seaman still has a contract to write a book, though presumably without reference to the Lennon diaries, *People* decides to include Seaman in its roundup. On their way to lunch one afternoon, Ono and Havadtoy are walking through Central Park and happen onto a photo session for the magazine: There is Seaman, silhouetted against the Dakota, posing for a *People* photographer. Ono's eyes meet Seaman's, but no words are exchanged.

Nonetheless, Seaman's obsession has clearly become manic. He calls a reporter at odd hours, saying only, "How does it feel to be useless?" then calls the Dakota with the same enigmatic message. He spreads stories about Ono's wickedness—that she is a drug addict, that she was having affairs before Lennon died, that she had McCartney arrested in Japan for possessing marijuana. Seaman will admit to friends that the smears are meant to "discredit Ono at all costs." Havadtoy's former roommate, hairdresser Luciano Sparacino, adds more harassment by trying to inveigle money from him so he will not be forced to sell unfavorable stories to the media. Sparacino will then sell the tabloid press an account of how Lennon had planned to divorce Ono before he died, and how Ono and Havadtoy had secretly married in Hungary. (Demonstrably false, Ono says.)

The stories, circulating wildly around New York, take their toll. So do the continuing "unexplainable events" around the Dakota: Passports are found to be missing and then turn up days later on the kitchen table; lyrics to new songs disappear and then just as mysteriously reappear; collages by Lennon that were being admired disappear and then reappear in unexpected places. It is beginning to sound like the movie *Gaslight*, in which a woman is made to feel she is going crazy.

One event in particular pulls these various strands together. On a hot summer afternoon, Mahoney is relating to a visitor some of the occurrences within the Dakota over the past several years and points to a fat folder labeled *UNRANGED*. It contains all the letters received by Ono from clearly disturbed writers. He pulls out an envelope as an example of something extraordinarily odd—a letter addressed to a man in Italy with the Dakota as the home address. It was returned to sender when the addressee couldn't be found. The name of the sender: Mark David Chapman.

What is odder is the postmark—August 1980. Four months before Chapman killed Lennon. Evidence, at the very least, of premeditation, if it was, indeed, Chapman who wrote the letter, using the Dakota as his home address. The

mention of the writer's "mission" in New York City.

Mahoney mentions that Ono has not seen this particular letter, since it was only recently received after sitting in a dead-letter post-office box somewhere for a long time. He intends to send it upstairs.

One evening some time later, conversation in the Dakota kitchen is intense; eerie calls have been received from Seaman; speculation is rife about who could be behind the disappearances and mysterious reappearances; could any of it be overheated imagination? Clearly, the participants in the conversation—Mintz, Ono and Havadtoy—are feeling the heat. During a lull in the conversation, an envelope that has been lying on the table is casually picked up—and it looks like the deranged Chapman letter Mahoney received. But it is not. The postmark, clearly showing 1980 that afternoon, is now 1981. The letter inside, though similar in appearance and tone, is also different: There is no mention of the writer's mission in New York. If some kind of switch was made, it could only have been to make it seem as if some crank had written a letter to Italy in 1981 and, with Lennon long dead, had used Chapman's name and the Dakota address as some sort of macabre joke.

The implications are discussed and everyone gets extremely agitated. Sitting around the kitchen table, they ask who could have switched the letter and the envelope. Doesn't it have to have been someone in the inner circle? "Who is it?" Ono asks. "I want to know!" The three of them look fearfully at one another. More *Gaslight*.

The moment passes, but the "Chapman" letter remains unexplained.

JULY 1983

The hot summer of 1983 passes slowly. Ono is back in the recording studio, mixing *Milk and Honey*. She spends hours in the studio listening to playbacks of Lennon's final songs—*Living on Borrowed Time*, *Grow Old with Me*—over and over again. It is almost masochistic, and Havadtoy consoles her as she calls for the engineer to rewind the tape for what seems like the 100th time. Often Sean is with her, enjoying his father's voice as it pours out of the speakers, and just as often he is eager to get back to his room, where he can outsmart the attacking pickles on a BurgerTime video game.

AUGUST 1983

There is good news at last. Simon & Schuster have dropped their plans to publish Seaman's book. The editors apparently found too many of his claims unsubstantiated, and the rights to the material are returned to him.

As quickly as the relief is felt, it is shattered. There is talk that Seaman has

agreed to cooperate with Albert Goldman, rather than try to publish his own book. Goldman is known to be a talented writer but shrewd in his assessment of reading tastes: Scandal sells, and the dirtier the better, as he found out with *Elvis*. This time, with a \$900,000 advance, and with sources reluctant to speak with him because Ono has made her feelings known, he is on the spot—he must produce. So there are reports that he has hired a couple of women to approach anyone who has dirt on Lennon and propose to sign them up exclusively for payment. At least one person, Tony Manero, a musician who knew Lennon briefly during the Sixties, says Goldman has offered to pay for his exclusive story of a homosexual liaison with Lennon. The only problem, says Manero, is that the liaison never took place. And hairdresser Sparacino admits he negotiated with Goldman to sell his story. He claims to be the only one who knows the "true" story of Lennon's last year. "Only John, Yoko and I know the truth," he says. "John can't tell it, Yoko won't, and I will." He is willing to tell his story to *PLAYBOY* as well—"for a price."

At least this one causes Ono to laugh. "John never even spoke to him," she says.

Whether or not Goldman is behind the new frenzy in publishing circles, someone is playing hardball. A possible source on Lennon's private life who has refused to sign an exclusive agreement to tell his story in a forthcoming book found that his house was burglarized shortly afterward—and only material pertaining to Lennon was stolen.

Goldman maintains that his book on Lennon will be different from the sensationalistic biography of *Elvis* because he has "intense respect" for Lennon, and he denies offering to pay anyone for his stories. "I never do that," he says. He did, however, collaborate with a major source on the *Elvis* book, Lamar Fike, with whom he shares a copyright credit and royalties.

When questioned, Goldman denies that he will be using material from Seaman but acknowledges that he sees certain things from Seaman's viewpoint—charging that Ono manipulated the New York District Attorney's office ("She went after Fred with the avid cooperation of the D.A.'s office") and that Simon & Schuster caved in to pressure from Ono ("Yoko's lawyers put so much heat on the publisher, they decided to squirm out").

"On their own, the books are irrelevant," Mintz sums up. "Who reads yesterday's papers? These books come and go. Yoko can deal with them after everything she's been through these past three years. But in ten years, Sean will be 18 and he may want to read some of this stuff to see what his father was like. What impact will it have on him? That's really the \$900,000 obscenity. At what price do you rob a child of his dreams and his heri-

ty?"

It is the end of a trying summer. Ono is curiously detached from the renewed plotting, calmer than she was during the first wave. She is sitting in the white room smoking a cigarette, the white piano on which Lennon composed *Imagine* behind her. She laughs at a visitor's suggestion that her life would make a terrific soap opera.

"No," she says, "that's too complicated for me. I prefer simple stories, fairy tales—perhaps something by Walt Disney, like *Snow White* and the Seven Dwarfs."

"With you as *Snow White*, no doubt."

"Yeah," she half laughs. "Only there would be seven little books coming out."

SEPTEMBER 1983

The mixing on the *Milk and Honey* album is nearly done and Havadtoy has finished the major part of his work on a project Lennon conceived and he is executing—an album of Ono's songs sung by different artists, such as Roberta Flack, Harry Nilsson and John Lennon. It can all be finished in San Francisco, they decide impulsively. Enough New York paranoia and craziness: A breath of brisk, tolerant San Francisco air will do them a lot of good.

After a week in San Francisco, their mood is so good they decide to postpone further travel plans for Japan and spend some time in the Bay Area. They take drives into the wine country, they go climbing in the hills and Sean has his first taste in years of playing without a security guard a few feet away. Ono and Havadtoy make some discreet inquiries: What about the schools in the area? Might there be a suitable house they could buy? Word leaks out and the local media explode—"YOKO MOVING WEST!"

This time, the media attention seems benign: There aren't any reporters digging for dirt, there are no known plots to cash in on their presence. It is all Muir Woods and Calistoga mud baths and the fog rolling in through the Golden Gate Bridge. . . .

A phone rings in their hotel room. San Francisco police. A man has been arrested in an apartment about a mile away, firing "practice" rifle rounds out his window. He has three guns and 700 rounds of ammunition and a number of books about Lennon and Ono. He has told police he is "after" Yoko Ono.

A West Coast security team is hired and guards are stationed outside their hotel room. A bodyguard is rushed to the school Sean is temporarily attending.

A day later, their former New York life seeming to stalk them, they hear of a new publishing note: *People* editor Jim Gaines has gotten in to interview Mark Chapman for more than 40 hours. A book is planned. The Son of Sam law has been finessed because Chapman, who once

...to Yoko about his promise. "delicate matter." will not be profit from his cooperation.

Ono breaks down in her hotel room, sobbing, "Chapman is going to do it! He's going to write his book!" Havadtoy tries to convince her that he is not really writing the book, only telling his sordid story, but it is no use. There is no escaping it. They make plans to return to New York.

OCTOBER 1983

Sean and John Lennon were born on the same date, so it is just as well the family is back in New York to celebrate. Ono and Havadtoy go out shopping for Sean, stop in Little Italy for lunch, then return to the Dakota. As their limousine pulls up, there is a group of fans gathered who become excited. They are the loyalists, the ones who know when Sean's birthday is, who follow Yoko's travels. An Englishman holds a copy of *Double Fantasy* in front of her and asks her to sign. In a scene reminiscent of other days, fans swarm around them.

Walking under the archway, Ono notices two women with their children. They are Jeri and Jude, among the most loyal of John and Yoko fans, the ones who regularly greeted the former Beatle and his wife almost every day since the mid-Seventies and continued to stand outside the Dakota after Lennon's death. Ono goes over and says hello, putting her arm around one of the women's shoulders.

"We have a present for Sean," Jeri says.

"Then why don't you come up?" Ono says suddenly. The women are stunned. They have never been closer to the Lennons' home than the archway. They totter after Ono and Havadtoy, following them with their children in tow, as the deskman at the Dakota looks on suspiciously.

Struck silent, they can only look around as they ascend in the elevator and enter the apartment. Ono keeps up a light chatter about Sean. "He's grown, you know. You'll be surprised."

Sean is called out, the women give him their present and Ono invites them to the dining room for tea. And there, as if they have been waiting three years to tell someone, they begin to tell the story of the last time they waited to see John Lennon. It comes out haltingly at first, then in a rush, as Ono sits, mute and pale.

It was December eighth, and although Jeri had to stay at home, Jude was at her post outside the Dakota, as always. She noticed the young man from Hawaii who had been there once before, among the regulars. He recognized her and came up to show her the brand-new copy of *Double Fantasy* he was going to try to get Lennon to sign. Since it didn't seem that Lennon or Ono would appear any time soon, he asked Jude to have lunch with him and she accepted.

They are across the street at a coffee shop. He spoke pleasantly to her about his home in Hawaii. Jude said, "I'd love to see Hawaii, but I'll probably never get to see it."

The man admonished her. "Don't think that way. You can accomplish anything you truly believe in!"

Around four P.M., Jude had to leave. She tried to convince the man that he should give up waiting for Lennon and come back another time. It was so cold! But the man stayed.

At 11 P.M., Jeri heard that John Lennon had been shot. Some time later, when his death was announced and the name of the man who'd murdered him was flashed on the television screen, Jude realized he was the man with whom she'd had lunch.

Ono says nothing but thanks them for coming. At least she feels good about having invited them up. It may well have been the most important day of their lives, sharing these moments with Sean in John Lennon's home. Once upon a time, the Dakota was that kind of place: A couple of teenaged fans could break into the offices and find themselves hired. A touch of old times.

The next day, on Sean and John's birthday, as friends and children have come for the party, fans have gathered outside the Dakota again, some holding up posters and photographs. They begin to sing John Lennon songs. Ono is upstairs and hears the voices. She is interrupted by an intercom buzzing. She answers it. It is the doorman downstairs. A man, asking about Yoko Ono, has slipped into the building.

